
CONSUMER RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

PROPOSAL FOR MERGER

A proposal has been made by the Association for Consumer Research for amalgamation with the Consumer Advisory Council of the British Standards Institution, and this will soon be discussed by the councils on both sides.

The suggestion for a merger comes only three months after the launching of the Association for Consumer Research as "the first entirely independent consumer association" formed in this country to offer to the public "unbiased, tested information about the goods and services it buys." The British Standards Institution's Consumer Advisory Council is supported by a Government grant of £10,000 a year and the subscriptions of the industrial firms and associations who are members.

Dr. Michael Young, chairman of the council of the Association for Consumer Research, said yesterday: "A proposal has been made by the association to the British Standards Institution that the setting up of a new and completely independent body, as an amalgamation of the association and the Consumer Advisory Council of the British Standards Institution, should be considered." Neither Dr. Young nor a spokesman of the British Standards Institution would make any comment about the reasons for this move.

Apparently the proposal for an amalgamation was first mooted early in December, and it has been mentioned at a meeting of the British Standards Institution council, but it will not be discussed in particular by them until the next council meeting in February. Since the Association for Consumer Research made a point of their independence of Government grant or assistance from industry at the time of their public launching, it is surprising that a merger should be contemplated so quickly.

The association, known shortly as C.R., publish a quarterly magazine entitled *Which*. This contains frank assessments of the comparative quality of named brands of consumer goods and services. The second edition is expected to be published shortly. The association intended to live on the revenue from subscriptions—a member of the public can become an associate member for 10s. a year—and the preliminary work was financed by a small gift from a charitable educational trust.

The Consumer Advisory Council of the B.S.I. produce a comparable publication entitled *Shopper's Guide*, which deals only with consumer goods.

Consumer Research Association.

The Times (London, England), Thursday, Jan 09, 1958; pg. 6; Issue 54044. (371 words)

Category: News

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Gale Document Number:CS102586921